

**Amendments to the Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A metal strip ~~(3)~~ continuous casting plant ~~(3)~~ equipped with an ingot mould ~~(16)~~ and strip temperature regulation device ~~consisting of~~ comprising a pair of parallel, counter-rotating rolls ~~(2, 2')~~ and two closing plates at the ends of said rolls ~~(2, 2')~~ defining a vertical casting plane of said strip ~~(3)~~, wherein the strip temperature regulation device comprises at least one substantially rectangular panel ~~(5)~~ ~~placed below the plane of the axis of said rolls (2, 2')~~ and with wherein the rectangular panel has its longest dimension substantially parallel to the axis of said rolls, and has at least one conduit ~~(6, 8, 8')~~ suitable for the passage of cooling gas ~~wherein the at least one substantially rectangular panel (5) is placed below the rolls is placed below the plane of the axis of said rolls~~ at such a short distance from the rolls that the temperature of the strip, in the zone immediately upon exit from the ingot mould, is maintained uniform along its length, ~~wherein at least one panel (5) is made of refractory material,~~ has means for varying the inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane and is inclined at a predetermined angle of value different from zero with respect to said vertical strip casting plane ~~(3)~~.

2. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 1, wherein there are provided outlet nozzles ~~(7)~~ of said at least one conduit ~~(6, 8, 8')~~ adapted for spraying gas towards the strip ~~(3)~~.

3. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 2, wherein said conduits ~~(6)~~ are formed inside said at least one panel ~~(5)~~.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 2, wherein said conduits ~~(8, 8')~~ are located externally alongside said at least one panel ~~(5)~~.

6. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 5, wherein there are provided more than one conduits ~~(8, 8')~~.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 6, wherein said at least one panel ~~(5)~~ has means for varying the inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane ~~(3)~~.

9. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 1, wherein there are provided two panels ~~(5)~~ placed symmetrically at each side of said vertical strip casting plane ~~(3)~~.

10. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 8, wherein the two panels ~~(5)~~ have means for varying their inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane ~~(3)~~.

11. (Currently Amended) A metal strip ~~(3)~~ continuous casting plant ~~(3)~~ equipped with an ingot mould ~~(16)~~ and strip temperature regulation device comprising ~~consisting of~~ a pair of parallel, counter-rotating rolls ~~(2, 2')~~ and two closing plates at the ends of said rolls ~~(2, 2')~~ defining a vertical casting plane of said strip ~~(3)~~, wherein the strip temperature regulation device comprises at least one substantially rectangular panel ~~(5)~~ placed below the plane of the axis of said rolls ~~(2, 2')~~ and with its longest dimension substantially parallel to the axis of said rolls and at least one conduit ~~(6, 8, 8')~~ suitable for the passage of cooling gas wherein the at least one substantially rectangular panel ~~(5)~~ is placed below the rolls at such a short distance from the rolls that the temperature of the strip, in the zone immediately upon exit from the ingot mould, is maintained uniform along its length, wherein at least one panel ~~(5)~~ is adjustably inclined at an ~~a predetermined~~ angle of value different from zero with respect to said vertical strip casting plane ~~(3)~~.

12. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 11, wherein there are provided outlet nozzles~~(7)~~ of said at least one conduit~~(6, 8, 8')~~ adapted for spraying gas towards the strip~~(3)~~.

13. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 12, wherein said conduits ~~(6)~~ are formed inside said at least one panel~~(5)~~.

14. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 13, wherein said at least one panel~~(5)~~ has means for varying the inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane~~(3)~~.

15. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 12, wherein said conduits ~~(8, 8')~~ are located externally alongside said at least one panel~~(5)~~.

16. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 15, wherein there are provided more than one conduits~~(8, 8')~~.

17. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 16, wherein said at least one panel~~(5)~~ has means for varying the inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane~~(3)~~.

18. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 11, wherein there are provided two panels~~(5)~~ placed symmetrically at each side of said vertical strip casting plane ~~(3)~~.

19. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 18, wherein the two panels ~~(5)~~ have means for varying their inclination with respect to the vertical strip casting plane~~(3)~~.

20. (Currently amended) The device according to claim 11 wherein at least one panel~~(5)~~ is made of refractory material.

21. (new) A metal strip continuous casting plant comprising:  
a pair of parallel, counter-rotating rolls for continuously casting a metal strip; and  
a strip temperature regulation device comprising:  
at least one panel placeable below the rolls and adjacent the metal strip at  
an angle greater than zero such that an upper distal end of the panel is further  
away from the metal strip compared to a lower distal end of the panel;

a plurality of nozzles disposed on a panel proximal surface which faces the metal strip for dispersing cooling medium toward the metal strip;

a plurality of ducts in fluid communication with the nozzles for routing the cooling medium to the nozzles.

22. (new) The plant of Claim 21 wherein the cooling medium is a gas.
23. (new) The plant of Claim 21 wherein the panel has an L shape.
24. (new) The plant of Claim 21 wherein the panel is pivotably hinged at the lower distal end thereof for adjusting the angle of the panel to the metal strip.
25. (new) The plant of Claim 21 wherein the angle of the panel to the metal strip is 30 degrees.